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Process and device for cosmetic treatment, especially
for care, for makeup or for dyeing

5 The present invention relates to the treatment,
especially the cosmetic making up, dyeing or care, of
some or all of the human body.

The technique of tattooing has been known since ancient
10 times and consists in indelibly inserting dyeing
substances under the epidermis.

Tattooing makes it possible to obtain a color design of
very high quality, but requires delicate intervention,
15 especially in terms of health risk because of the
incision of the skin. As a result, many people abandon
the idea of being tattooed because of the indelibility
and the surgical aspect of the operation.

20 Makeup products which temporarily offer some covering
effect and can substantially alter the appearance of
the part of the body which they cover are also known.
Document US 5 785 960 describes an apparatus for
manufacturing a composition for dyeing the skin using a
25 reading of the skin color.

Makeup products are easy to apply, but they do not stay
on for more than a few hours, particularly in hot
and/or humid weather.

30 Moreover, makeup products seek to imitate the
appearance of a normal skin and do not offer any
freedom of design.

35 Small stamping pads for applying a design onto the skin
by transfer printing have recently appeared. The
durability of the design on the skin is of the order of
a few days. However, no freedom of design is offered.

The user reproduces only the design present on the stamping pad.

5 The present invention proposes to overcome the drawbacks mentioned hereinabove.

10 The present invention proposes a process for treatment, especially for makeup or for temporary dyeing, without incision of the skin, capable of taking account of the local characteristics of the skin and offering a complete freedom of design.

15 The present invention proposes a device for implementing the process hereinabove. The device comprises a means of positioning said part, a means of taking images, a means of analyzing images in order to obtain the local characteristics of said part, and a means of applying treatment products over said part according to said local characteristics.

20 The process for treatment, especially for care, for makeup or for dyeing, according to one aspect of the invention, comprises steps of taking at least one image of at least one part of the body, especially a human body, to be treated, of analyzing local characteristics of said part from the image, and of applying, by means of a machine, suitable treatment products over said part according to said local characteristics, said machine being controlled by at least one signal generated on the basis of the analysis of said local characteristics.

35 Advantageously, the process comprises steps of recognizing the desired visual characteristics and of applying treatment products, especially makeup or dyeing products, over a part to be treated, especially to be made up, according to said desired characteristics.

Advantageously, the process comprises steps of defining particular areas of said part and of applying makeup or dyeing products successively over said particular areas.

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In one embodiment of the invention, the process comprises a step of storing, for a given person, the products used and the visual characteristics obtained.

10 Advantageously, the local characteristics obtained immediately after applying the treatment products are monitored.

15 The monitoring may be carried out by feedback or automatic control, with real-time correction of the makeup operation or of the treatment, if necessary.

20 In one embodiment of the invention, the application of treatment products is carried out by a moving application head which follows the relief of the part while remaining a short distance away or while being in contact. The head may comprise a powder puff, a roll or a coarse or fine brush, usually used in cosmetics.

25 In one embodiment of the invention, the distance between the moving application head and said part is monitored in real time.

30 In one embodiment of the invention, the monitoring of the local characteristics obtained immediately after the application of the products is carried out using the moving application head.

35 Several treatment products, for example 2, 3 or 4, especially makeup and/or care products, can be applied simultaneously by the moving application head.

In one embodiment of the invention, the moving application head is supported by an arm which is

articulated in order to be capable of following the relief of said part.

5 In one embodiment of the invention, the moving application head comprises at least one nozzle capable of spraying a treatment product, said head being of the piezoelectric, pneumatic, electrospray, thermospray or aerosol type.

10 Advantageously, the flow rate of each product can be varied according to the coordinates of the site onto which said product is being applied. A step of recognizing said part may be implemented in order to determine to which organ said part belongs, for example
15 the arm, the hand, the scalp, the face and its parts such as the eye, eyelid, pupil, cheek, eyelash, eyebrow, lip, forehead and nose.

A two- or three-dimensional reconstruction of said part
20 may be provided in order to obtain a two- or three-dimensional, preferably a three-dimensional representation. The three-dimensional representation is produced especially from at least two images.

25 In one embodiment of the invention, the treatment products are applied by airbrushing, by transfer printing, by tattooing or by a wipe impregnated with the product to be applied.

30 In one embodiment of the invention, at least one digital image of said human body part to be treated is taken. A digital camera, for example a CCD camera, may be used to this end.

35 In another embodiment of the invention, the digital image or images of said human body part to be treated is/are digitized. An analog/digital conversion means may be provided to this end.

In one embodiment of the invention, the image taking and application steps are carried out in a first zone, and the analysis step is carried out in a second zone distinct from the first zone, with communication
5 between said zones by means of a telecommunications network, of the Internet type.

In another embodiment of the invention, the image taking step is carried out in a first zone, the
10 analysis step is carried out in a second zone distinct from the first zone, and the application step is carried out in a third zone distinct from the first and second zones, with communication between said zones by means of a telecommunications network, of the Internet
15 type.

In one embodiment of the invention, a signal intended to control an application machine is generated.

20 In one embodiment of the invention, said signal is used to control said application machine.

The positioning means may be a cast or a chin strap intended to immobilize the part to be treated (arm or
25 head).

The image analysis means may be software which, in principle, is aware of the position and the shape of the part to be treated (for example the lips),
30 especially software which processes the image by regional growth.

The device may be provided with rollers which are motorized or non-motorized for contact with the human
35 body and relative displacement with respect to the latter, the axes of the rollers being fixed with respect to the application means in order to maintain a determined distance between the application means and the human body.

The device may comprise a support for the human body part having to receive the treatment product or products.

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A light source may be combined with the image taking means.

10 The application means may be supported by an articulated arm and may comprise a nozzle, for example of the piezoelectric type.

15 The device may comprise means for controlling the position of the application head with respect to the part of the area to be treated.

20 The device may comprise a means for automatically controlling the total amount and the respective amounts of each composition and of each ingredient according to the desired characteristics, especially with feedback.

25 Thus, the invention offers the advantages of freedom of design of conventional tattooing, the ease of use of a makeup operation and an average durability which may be readily controlled according to the wishes of the user, from a few hours to about 20 days. The fact that the local characteristics of said part are taken into account further increases the visual quality of the drawing obtained, especially to play with three-

30 dimensional or perspective or even optical effects, enabling some skin imperfections to be made invisible.

35 The term "part of the body, especially the human body" refers herein to the skin, for example of the face, of a limb, etc., the scalp, mucus membranes, semi-mucus membranes, keratinous fibers, for example the eyelashes, eyebrows, head hair, the nails and body hair.

The applicator 7 comprises a case 9 which may be fixed to the floor or to any suitable support, an articulated assembly 10 fixed at one end to the case 9 and supporting at the opposite end a product application head 11.

The articulated assembly 10 comprises two arms 12 and 13. The arm 12 is mounted so as to pivot on the case 9 by means of an articulation 14. The arm 13 is mounted so as to pivot on the arm 12 by an articulation 15 and the head 11 is mounted so as to pivot on the arm 13 by means of an articulation 16. The articulations 14, 15 and 16 are motorized or provided with actuators for moving the head 11 with respect to the case 9 along several axes, preferably perpendicular to each other. Optionally, the arms 12 and 13 may be telescopic, for example by means of an electric cylinder. If it is desired for the head 11 to carry out more complex movements, more than three articulations may be provided so that they give said head 11 a larger number of degrees of freedom.

A light source 20 may be attached to the camera 1 in order to improve the lighting and therefore the quality of the images obtained. The light source 20 will be active at least in visible light and may be of the light-emitting diode, xenon arc, halogen, etc., type.

The application head 11 comprises a row of spraying nozzles 17 fed with treatment products from one or more reservoirs (not shown), for example placed in the case 9, and two distance sensors 18 and 19 capable of measuring the distance between the application head 11 and the surface on which the treatment product is to be applied. The detectors 18 and 19 may each include a laser diode emitting a laser beam adjusted to cross the other laser beam emitted by the other diode at the desired distance between the head 11 and the surface which is to receive the treatment product, such that a

difference with respect to this desired distance can be readily detected. The nozzles 17 may be of the inkjet type with a piezoelectric crystal or an electrostatic means.

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Inkjet printing is a contact-free process. The ink is emitted from nozzles. Liquid inks of various colors spurt onto the surface to be treated in order to form an image. The application head 11 sweeps over said surface in parallel strips. In order to increase the printing speed, the application head 11 simultaneously prints in one pass a row of pixels by means of the row of nozzles 17. The inkjet technique is generally either thermal or electrostatic or even piezoelectric.

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In the present application, the piezoelectric technique, in which a piezoelectric crystal is placed in the bottom of a product reservoir close to a nozzle, is preferably used. When a current is applied to the piezoelectric crystal, it becomes deformed, which creates a force sufficient to eject a droplet of product. The product does not need to be heated and the droplets may be of very small size. In order to obtain color designs, cyan, magenta and yellow color product cartridges will be provided. Preferably, a black color cartridge will also be provided in order to obtain a good quality black. Two additional cartridges, light cyan and light magenta, may also be provided for finer designs.

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Of course, product characteristics other than the color characteristics will be adapted to that part of the human body intended to receive them: skin, nails, hair, etc. Moreover, cartridges of care product and/or of makeup product will also be provided.

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The system operates as follows. A person wishing to treat part of his body, for example the face, the hand, the hair, etc., is installed in the field of vision of

the camera 1 for one or more views to be taken. Specifically, the production of a three-dimensional image of the part of the human body which is a preferred variant, requires at least two views to be
5 taken from different angles by means of at least two fixed cameras or by means of one moving camera. The image files obtained on taking these views are transferred from the camera 1 to the central processing unit 3 which performs processing generally known as
10 reconstruction and allowing a three-dimensional image to be obtained, which is then transferred to the memory 4. To improve the quality of the three-dimensional image, optional processing treatments may be carried out by the central processing unit, for example to
15 correct geometrical defects associated with the perception of the relief. The three-dimensional image obtained and stored in the memory 4 may be displayed on the screen 5. In the case of a three-dimensional image, it is not essential for the central processing unit 3
20 to perform such processing. Design software stored in the memory 4 allows the user, or an operator who may assist him, to simulate on the screen 5 various possible makeup operations or dyeings according to preexisting designs stored in the memory 4, or designs
25 provided by the user on a digital medium such as a floppy disk or a CD ROM capable of being read by a suitable reader (not shown) connected to the central processing unit 3. Retouching may be performed by means of the keyboard 6 or the screen 5 if the latter is of
30 the touch-type, until the effect desired by the user is obtained on the screen 5. The design may also be entirely composed by the user or by the operator. Design software such as PHOTOSHOP® from Adobe or PAINTBRUSH® from Microsoft may be used.

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At the same time that this choice is made by the user, the central processing unit performs an analysis of the characteristics of the surface to be made up or colored from the two- or three-dimensional image, so as

to determine the topological characteristics of said surface, in order to determine whether an application of a treatment product is necessary prior to the application of a makeup or dyeing product, for example
5 in the case of a dry skin or even in the case of a wrinkled skin. The two-dimensional image is suitable for dry skin or for nonuniform colors (pigmentation mark or scar). For wrinkled skins, the three-dimensional image is preferred.

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The central processing unit 3 also performs processing allowing various parts of the human body to be recognized, especially to differentiate hair from skin, to recognize the fingers and the nails of a hand and to
15 recognize the various parts of the face, especially the lips, the eyebrows, the cheeks and more generally any part requiring the application of a specific treatment, makeup or dyeing product, for example by means of segmentation-recognition software.

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At the end of these steps, the central processing unit 3 prepares a signal for controlling the applicator 7 and sends it to the control means 8. The control means 8 control the following operations according to the
25 control signal received from the central processing unit 3.

The application head 11 is brought into the field of vision of the camera 1 and placed close to the surface
30 which is to be made up or dyed, so that the row of nozzles 17 is at the desired spraying distance, which is verified using the sensors 18 and 19. Of course the part of the user's body which is to be treated will be properly immobilized for the duration of the treatment.
35 The head-surface distance is dynamically controlled in real time by the control means 8.

In the case of applying makeup, a first passage of the head 11 may allow a care product to be deposited and a

second passage will allow the makeup product itself to be deposited.

Advantageously, it is possible to provide for a third
5 passage of the head 11. The second passage then allows a color product to be deposited and the third passage allows a matting agent to be deposited.

In the case of a pigmentation mark detected by the
10 camera 1 and identified by the central processing unit 3, the treatment product could be or could comprise a covering product making it possible to give the pigmentation mark the same appearance as the rest of the skin.

15 By way of a variant, it is possible to envisage simultaneously depositing two or more products so as to accelerate the process. To this end, several rows of nozzles 17 arranged in a matrix may be provided
20 allowing different products to be applied simultaneously but in sites which are slightly offset. In the event of scars being present, they may be camouflaged by applying dye with optical illusion patterns, making it possible to give an illusion of
25 relief. The central processing unit 3 will perform a colorimetric analysis of the image perceived by the camera 1, so as to determine the local shade of the part having to be treated.

30 A dyeing product, for example an ink, may be applied in order to obtain the image selected by the user on the screen 5. A step of applying a varnish and/or a product intended to prevent desquamation and enabling the staying power of the dyeing to be prolonged may then be
35 included. Of course, an ink and possibly a varnish which can be removed without damaging the skin, for example by an organic solvent, by water or by a surfactant product, will be chosen.

The care products used prior to the makeup or dyeing product may also be made by mixing a dye and a care product at low dose such as hydroquinone, kojic acid or arbutin. It is also possible to add to the dyeing or
5 makeup product a self-tanning agent, for example dihydroxyacetone or even a substrate and enzyme assembly reacting *in situ* on the skin during the application, it being possible for the substrate to be a polymer of the polyphenol family.

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In the case of dyeing or making up a skull, the hair of which is cut extremely short, products intended for the skin will be used to produce the pattern desired by the user, such as stripes, degradations, streaks, etc.

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The spraying nozzles 17 may be of the piezoelectric spraying type, allowing a wide variety of treatment or pigment products to be used. The product is forced through the nozzle which is of small diameter and made
20 to vibrate at high frequency by a piezoelectric crystal placed in the head 11. The product in liquid form then splits into fine droplets which are expelled by the nozzle. At the outlet, the droplets may be diverted by any known means, such as by means of deflection
25 electrodes, allowing multidiverted continuous jet printing.

The entire surface to be made up or dyed is crossed by the head 11 with real time measurement of the distance
30 by means of the sensors 18 and 19 for maintaining the distance required by the type of nozzle that is used, thus allowing accurate monitoring of the relief and a high-quality application.

35 Figure 2 illustrates in more detail the moving head 11. The set of nozzles 17 comprises four nozzles 21, 22, 23 and 24, four removable cartridges 25, 26, 27 and 28, each one containing a product that it is desired to apply and being connected via a tube 29, 30, 31, 32 to

the corresponding nozzle 21, 22, 23, 24. By way of example, the cartridges 25 to 28 may contain:

- each a base dyeing composition;
- each a dyeing composition derived from a mixture;
- 5 - one a covering product of the foundation type, the others different dyeing compositions, etc.

The moving head 11 comprises a means of identifying cartridges 25 to 28, for example in the form of four
10 sensors 33 to 36, each one dedicated to a cartridge 25 to 28 and capable of recognizing the contents of the cartridge, especially by reading a mechanical, optical, magnetic, etc. code.

15 Product pumping means are also provided to transfer a product from a cartridge 25, 26, 27, 28 to the corresponding nozzle 21, 22, 23, 24. The moving head 11 may comprise a means of monitoring the amount of product present in each cartridge 25, 26, 27, 28, for
20 example in the form of a sensor dedicated to measuring the mass of a cartridge 25, 26, 27, 28 and allowing the product level to be estimated, or of a sensor dedicated to measuring the flow rate of a pumping means, or else a sensor dedicated to measuring the electric current
25 consumed by a pumping means, the current decreasing when a cartridge is empty and the pumping means no longer delivers product. An empty cartridge may be indicated by displaying an "empty cartridge" message on the screen 5 and/or by emitting a sound signal.
30 Alternatively, the screen 5 may comprise a zone dedicated to displaying the level of product in each cartridge.

The moving head 11 may comprise a means for maintaining
35 the temperature if the nature of the products, especially their viscosity, requires it, for example between 20 and 27°C, better still between 22 and 24°C. The maintenance of a relatively constant temperature avoids a dispersion of flow from the nozzles due to a

variation in viscosity.

Thus, after selecting the desired visual characteristics, the software stored in the memory 4 and
5 implemented by the central processing unit 3 verifies that the cartridges present in the head 11 are suitable for the desired visual characteristics. If such is not the case, a warning message is displayed on the screen 5.

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Verification is carried out from the signals emitted by the sensors 33 to 35 and received by the central processing unit 3, for example by a wire connection passing through the case 9.

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After the operator has made available, if necessary, suitable cartridges in the head 11, a corresponding message may be displayed on the screen 5.

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In other embodiments, the head 11 may comprise an application means such as an airbrush or a means of application by transfer printing, by tattooing or by a wipe impregnated with the product to be applied.

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The software calculates the instantaneous amounts of each product for each elementary area of the part to be treated according to the characteristics of said elementary area. In other words, for an elementary area of coordinates (x, y) or (x, y, z) , the software

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calculates the partial elementary amounts Q_{25} , Q_{26} , Q_{27} and Q_{28} of product from cartridges 25, 26, 27 and 28 according to the type of each product, the characteristics of the elementary area and the result to be obtained which may be defined by color and

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brightness variables.

The software also determines the order of application of the products which may be successive over the same area or juxtaposed over neighboring areas. In some

is performed by controlling a Z-translation table by means of the central processing unit 3.

5 The image acquired by the camera 1 for calculating the three-dimensional coordinates of the area observed also makes it possible to measure the color of the skin. To do this, the camera 1 is colorimetrically calibrated as is done for a scanner using an image of a calibration test card and calibration software, for example Profile
10 maker from Logo. To overcome skin brightness phenomenon, polarizers in the crossed position are used, which are placed on the projector 20 and in front of the objective of the camera. This calibration procedure makes it possible to obtain correspondence of
15 the image acquired with the colorimetric system and independent of the camera. The image makes it possible to have the color on each pixel and thus at each point of the area observed.

20 The positioning system 37, illustrated in figure 3, consists of two translation tables with stepper motors secured to each other, driven via a control unit. These tables allow the displacement of the distribution head 38 in Z (distance to the application area) and in X
25 (translation along the application area).

The distance from the distribution head 38 to the area to be treated may vary between 20 μm and 10 cm, preferably between 100 μm and 5 cm, and preferably,
30 between 250 μm and 1 cm.

The area of the body to be treated is kept in place using a suitable device. Mention is made, for example, of a cast 39 for the arm and of a chin strap (not
35 shown) for the head.

Design software supporting the screen and printing colorimetric calibrations (of the type Photoshop V5.02 from Adobe) makes it possible to select from an image

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database the type of makeup to be applied to the area and to visualize the result after application. The image acquired by the calibrated camera allows the exact restoration of the colors of the area.

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By means of the image modification software, it is possible to selectively correct a defect in the area to be treated (example: depigmented area). This area is encircled using the mouse and may be corrected using the same color as the surrounding skin.

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The colors are obtained by mixing together the four colors: cyan, magenta, yellow, black. The head is colorimetrically calibrated (ICC profile) so as to perfectly restore the colors of the makeup selected and viewed on the screen.

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In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the position of the distribution head 38 with respect to the skin may be dynamically controlled by means of a telemetry system. For example, by using a contact-free distance sensor operating on the principle of triangulation. The sensor has a measuring dynamic of plus or minus 1 cm with a precision less than 10 μ m and a working distance of 6.5 cm, for example of the BULLIER INTERNATIONAL type, Reference M5L/20. The signal from the sensor is digital and is connected to the central processing unit. The automatic control of the position of the distribution head makes it possible to compensate for small movements of the area to be treated. The automatic control is carried out by the central processing unit during printing of the selected design.

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By virtue of the invention, a makeup operation, a dyeing or a care treatment adapted to the user's wishes may be provided. The term "makeup operation" herein means the application of product taking into account the colorimetric and topological charact-

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eristics of the skin, and the term "dyeing" means the application of a covering product completely camouflaging the original shade of the skin. The system also applies to hair coloring. Patterns of different
5 colors and of different shapes may be produced thereon by means of this automatic treatment machine.

The presence of several cartridges makes it possible to prevent the formation of a mixture of products prior to
10 the application. On the contrary, each product is applied directly. Thus the use of an excessive amount of products is avoided, the mixture of which is specific to one person or to one localized site of a person and may not be used elsewhere.

15 Figure 4 illustrates the various steps of the image acquisition process, especially in the case of two identical cameras looking at an object from two different optical paths. The two images, called a left
20 image and a right image, are acquired at the same time, since the two cameras are synchronized. The view-taking is immediate, which eliminates any problems of user movement. The working volume is limited by the size of the vertical and horizontal fields of the cameras and
25 by the depth of field of the objectives. The two views show disparities which may be quantified, which make it possible to return to the topography of the observed surface. The topography of the observed object is calculated in step 40 by acquiring the left and right
30 images, in step 41 by calculating the optical geometry with interpolation and correcting the images provided by the central processing unit 3 of figure 3, in step 42 of calculating the disparities between the left and right images and by calculating the topography of the
35 surface.

By way of example, in step 43, the calibration data are obtained using a test card which is moved in the working volume of the two cameras, the calibration

25 The treatment product which may be applied within the
scope of the present invention may be of any
cosmetically acceptable nature.

It may also comprise the usual cosmetic ingredients, such as for example oils, waxes, water, solvents, dyes, thickeners, surfactants, fillers, film-forming or non film-forming polymers.

Among the oils and/or the waxes, mention may be made of

volatile or nonvolatile hydrocarbon and/or silicone and/or fluoro oils and waxes of animal, vegetable, mineral or synthetic origin.

- 5 Among the solvents, mention may be made of alcohols, especially C_1 - C_6 alcohols such as ethanol or isopropanol; glycols such as ethylene glycol or propylene glycol; glycerol; propylene glycol ethers; ketones; esters; ethers; alkanes; cyclic aromatic
10 compounds (toluene, benzene, xylene); aldehydes.

In a preferred embodiment, it may comprise at least one dye which may be a pigment or a water-soluble or liposoluble dye.

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The pigments may be white or colored, mineral and/or organic, and micrometer-sized or nanometer sized pigments.

- 20 Among the mineral pigments and nanopigments, mention may be made of titanium, zirconium or cerium oxides, and of zinc, iron or chromium oxides, ferric blue, chromium hydrate and ultramarines (aluminosilicate polysulfides).

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Among the organic pigments, mention may be made of carbon black and lacquers such as calcium, barium, aluminum, zirconium or strontium salts.

- 30 Among the water-soluble dyes, mention may be made of dyes that are common in the field in question such as the disodium salt of ponceau, the disodium salt of alizarine green, quinoline yellow, the trisodium salt of amaranth, the disodium salt of tartrazine, the
35 monosodium salt of rhodamine, the disodium salt of fuchsin, and xanthophyll, and mixtures thereof. Mention may also be made of halo acid dyes, azodyes and anthraquinone dyes.

Moreover, the product may comprise the usual additives commonly employed in the field in question, such as antioxidants, perfumes, preserving agents, cosmetic active ingredients, vitamins, essential fatty acids, sphingolipids, self-tanning compounds such as DHA and sunscreens.

In a preferred embodiment, the product comprises at least one compound generally used for the temporary or permanent dyeing of head hair or of nails.

In another preferred embodiment, the treatment product may comprise at least one compound capable of temporarily dyeing the skin, such as self-tanning agents (especially DHA).

In another preferred embodiment, the treatment product may comprise at least one cosmetic active ingredient, especially a care active ingredient such as a moisturizer, an agent for whitening the skin, a care product for a pigmentation mark, a pro-desquamating agent, and an antiwrinkle agent.

The treatment product is intended to be applied to the skin of the face and of the body, to the mucus membranes and/or to the keratin fibers, such as the nails, the eyebrows or the head hair. It may be in any pharmaceutical form that can be envisioned, such as an oily or aqueous gel; a liquid or gelled emulsion, an oil-in-water, water-in-oil or multiple emulsion; a dispersion; a multiphase system, especially a biphasic system; a solid composition such as a stick or bar.

This product may be in the form of a body hygiene composition; a hair composition, for example a hairstyling stick or hair makeup stick; a composition for making up the skin of the face, the body or the lips, for example a lipstick, liquid foundation in a stick or in a small dish, a face powder or an

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eyeshadow, a fixing base to be applied over a standard lipstick, a concealer stick, a lip gloss, eyeliner, mascara or temporary tattoo products; a care composition for facial or body skin including the scalp, the lips, the hair or the nails, for example a lip care balm or base, a daily care cream or a matting composition; an antisen or self-tanning composition.

In one embodiment of the invention, the camera 1, the applicator 7 and a screen are placed in a first location, and a data processing unit equipped with its peripherals is placed in a second location and is connected to the camera 1 and the applicator 7 by a communication network, for example of the Internet type. Interfaces such as modems will be connected to the camera 1 and the applicator 7, on the one hand, and to the data processing unit on the other hand. The data processing unit may be combined with a database which allows a larger choice of designs. Moreover, the data processing unit may be of high computing power. The data processing unit sends one or more images to the first location where the user selects an image and marks his approval. The control signal may then be produced at the first location by a local data processing means, or in the second location by said data processing unit on receiving a signal representative of the user's choice.

As a variant, the user can choose his image at a third location, for example at home on a personal computer connected to a communication network, mark his approval on an image, his approval then being transmitted to said data processing unit which then produces a signal intended to control the applicator, and sends it. The applicator, on receiving said signal, is ready to produce the image. The user then goes from the third location to the second location, for example a beauty salon, a manicure salon, a pharmacy, etc.

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Alternatively, the user has the applicator at home. He may also have the camera at home. In this case, the image taken by the camera is sent to a remote data processing unit which performs the various necessary
5 operations, proposes at least one image and produces and sends a signal intended to control the applicator on receiving the user's approval.

In the embodiment illustrated in figure 5, the camera
10 1, a computer 45 provided with a screen 5 and a keyboard 6, and the applicator 7 are placed in an acquisition and application zone 46, located for example at the user's home or in a beauty parlour. A computer 47 and a database 48 are placed in a remote
15 zone 49, located for example at the home of the designer or at the home of a system operator. The computer 47 and the database 48 are connected by a computer link, preferably with a high data rate, while being able to be located at some distance one from the
20 other. The computer 47 and the computer 45 are connected by a telecommunications network of the Internet type, preferably a fast Internet connection for example ADSL. The computer 47 may have a high computing power, thereby benefiting the user, while the
25 computer 45 will be of the inexpensive mass-produced computer type.

Furthermore, a unit 50 for formulating products is provided, for example in a laboratory, connected to the
30 database 48 by a computer link, preferably with a high data rate, while being able to be located at some distance one from the other.

In one direction, the data required by the camera in
35 the acquisition and application zone 46 will be sent to the computer 47 via the computer 45 which may or may not carry out a first data processing. The data may serve to feed a database bringing together all the typologies of current or potential clients. The data

contained in this base may then be used by a cosmetic product formulator in order to determine the characteristics of a product that it would be suitable to develop to meet the needs of this clientele.

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In the other direction, a signal containing information intended for the applicator 7 is carried. More specifically, the computer 47 processes data in order to generate an application message and/or data of one
10 or more images calculated from the characteristics of the user. If the computer 45 receives the application message, it processes it, for example by decompression, if said message contains compressed data, and sends a control signal to the applicator 7. The said sending of
15 the control signal may be subject to validation by the user.

If the computer 45 receives data of an image, it displays said image on the screen 5. The computer 45
20 may then require validation by the user. After said validation, the computer 45 may send a request for an application message to the computer 47.

In the embodiment illustrated in figure 6, references
25 to elements similar to those of figure 5 have been kept. The camera 1, and the computer 45 are placed in an acquisition zone 51, located for example at the user's home. The applicator 7 is placed in an application zone 52, located for example in a beauty
30 parlour. The applicator 7 is connected to the computer 47 by a link of the same type as that provided between the computer 45 and the computer 47.

In other words, the acquisition 51 and application 52
35 zones are distinct and may be distant. A personal code may be provided to identify characteristics specific to the user or characteristics chosen by the user and stored in the database 48. The personal code may be indicated to the user by the computer 45 in the

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acquisition zone 51 and will be requested from him by
the computer 47 in the application zone 52. The
personal code may have the double function of
identifying data of a user and of protecting the
5 confidentiality of said data.